



# Data Points

CWHS

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

**S**exually active women of reproductive age who wish to limit or postpone childbearing rely on contraception to prevent unintended pregnancy.<sup>1</sup> Public health programs designed to maintain and improve women's reproductive health need reliable data about contraceptive utilization to design and evaluate interventions.

The following two questions in the 1998 California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) provided information about contraceptive utilization: **"Are you or your male sexual partner using a birth control method to prevent pregnancy?"** and **"Which birth control method or methods are you using?"**

- About 55% of California women were reportedly at risk of unintended pregnancy—of these, 78% were using some method of contraception and 22% were not using any method to protect against an unintended pregnancy.

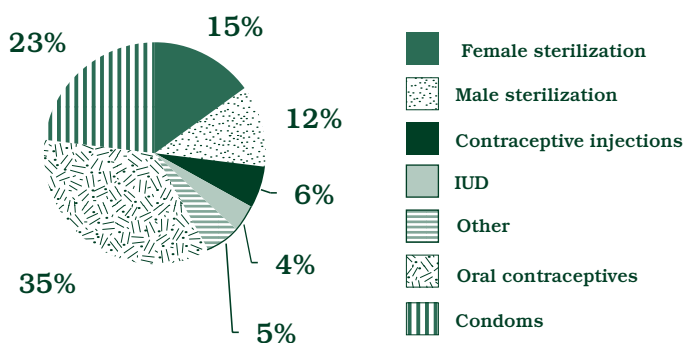
- Among women who use contraceptives, the most popular methods were oral contraceptives (35%) and condoms (23%).
- Oral contraceptives were the most commonly used method by women aged 18-24 (53%). Women aged 35-44 were the largest group most likely to report sterilization as their method of choice (28% rely on female sterilization and 24% rely on male sterilization).
- In general, contraceptive injections, intrauterine devices (IUDs) and contraceptive implants were not widely used. Contraceptive injections were more popular among women aged 18-24 (13%), Hispanic women (11%), and low-income women (11%) than were women as a whole (6%).

## CONTRACEPTIVE UTILIZATION AMONG CALIFORNIA WOMEN, 1998

Office of Family Planning

<sup>1</sup> Women are considered to be at risk of unintended pregnancy if they have had a partner in the past year who was not infertile, and were neither pregnant nor trying to become pregnant.

Methods Used by Contracepting Women Ages 18-44, California, 1998



**Note:** Other includes: natural family planning, 2.3%; diaphragm, 0.7%; contraceptive implant, 0.6%; foam/jelly, 0.5%; withdrawal, 0.48%; cervical cap, 0.12%; other, 0.25%.